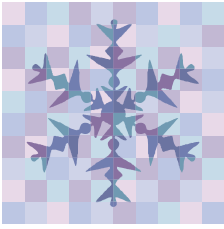


December 21, 2006



# Planning Department Newsletter



## COLLEGE HILL NEWS

College Hill matters have been at the forefront of planning department activity lately. Over the past few months, planning staff has been called upon to process a zone change application for a property in the 400 block of Oak Street, initiate a comprehensive study of land use and transportation on the hill, and review plans for new multi-family developments on Gray Lane and the 700 block of Oak Street. Also, the department learned that the College Hill historic district was selected for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, and the city received its first application for special property tax valuation from a homeowner within this district.

### Inside this issue:

#### *College Hill News:*

<i>College Hill Study</i>	2
<i>Proposed Gray Lane and Oak Street Developments</i>	3
<i>College Hill Historic District</i>	4
<i>Appeal Filed Against Wal-Mart</i>	4
<i>Pending Land Use Applications</i>	5

### **Oak Street Zone Change Proposal**

On November 14, 2006, the City Council denied a request to rezone an 18,000-square-foot parcel at 400 and 420 Oak Street from R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential to R4 High Density Multi-Family Residential. This was the second time in seven months that the Council had rejected this proposal. In December of 2005, the property owners, through their manager, Kathy Wilson, applied for the original zone change. After two meetings of the Planning Commission and three sessions with the City Council, the Council decided in April to deny the original request. Then, in July, the owners decided to reapply for the same zone change. Ms. Wilson indicated she resubmitted the application for the owners because of the following changed conditions: 1) the College Hill parking study,

pending at the time the original proposal was being considered, had been completed; 2) the boundaries of the College Hill historic district, in flux while the original application was being processed, had been defined; and 3) the city had approved a rezone from WSU to R4 for a small parcel on another part of College Hill, which the owners viewed as an opportunity for reconsideration of the Oak Street rezone request.

The Planning Commission held its public hearing on this second submittal on September 27. During that session, planning staff presented a report that included its recommendation for approval of the proposal. Public testimony was then offered by the applicant and by six individuals who opposed the request. The applicant indicated that the zone change was

## ***HAPPY HOLIDAYS!***

Season's Greetings from all of us here at the Pullman planning department!  
We wish you and yours a happy holiday season and a joyous 2007.

appropriate because high density housing is needed in proximity to the university, the residences in the Maple Street area are nearly all renter-occupied, and there are a number of existing multi-family developments in the neighborhood, including the Elmhurst apartment house located directly across the street from the subject property. The opponents stated that WSU student enrollment is down this year, so the need for more multi-family development is questionable; the house at 400 Oak Street is an historical structure that should be preserved; existing problems with traffic, parking, and vandalism would be exacerbated by the rezone; and the proposal would benefit the subject property owners to the detriment of the overall community. After weighing all the evidence, the Planning Commission, in a 3-2 vote, recommended approval of the zone change request.

The City Council conducted a series of meetings regarding this matter, starting on October 24 and ending on November 28. At the first of these sessions, the applicant and opponents reiterated the arguments they had made before the Planning Commission. When it came time for the Council to vote on the proposal, three members voted in favor of the

rezone and three members voted in opposition (one of the seven Council members had been excused from that particular meeting). Mayor Johnson was called upon to break the tie, and did so by voting against the application. The mayor said he voted in opposition because he had heard previously from the Council that it wanted to defer action on proposals such as these until the results of the pending College Hill comprehensive study were complete.

### **College Hill Study**

As noted in previous newsletters, the City Council has requested that a planning consultant be retained to prepare a comprehensive review of land use and transportation issues on College Hill. This review is being jointly funded by the city and WSU. At its meeting of November 14, the Council authorized the execution of a contract with Studio Cascade, Inc. of Spokane for the purpose of conducting this study.

Long before November, though, planning department staff had been assembling documentation in the city's files related to College Hill. This documentation included maps, aerial photographs, land use/ownership information, city plans (e.g., Comprehensive



Studio Cascade principal Bill Grimes meets with College Hill stakeholders Kathy Wilson and Anita Hornback.

Plan), pertinent city code regulations, street design standards, traffic and parking studies, vehicle accident data, a compilation of recent and proposed capital facilities, code enforcement history, and a list of recent and upcoming land use projects on the hill. Although planning staff is still putting the finishing touches on a few of these items, most of them were transmitted to the consultant early this month for review.

An important early step in any project of this nature is a consultant visit to the client's jurisdiction to see the study area firsthand and to conduct initial intake interviews. On December 11, Studio Cascade, Inc.'s principal planner Bill Grimes traveled to Pullman for a full day of orientation activities. Mr. Grimes engaged in question/answer sessions with representatives from the major stakeholder groups on College Hill; he spoke with business persons, College Hill Association members, landlords and property managers, WSU students, and a WSU administration official. Planning staff also escorted Mr. Grimes on a tour of the study area so he could view the various land uses there, including multi-family developments, single family neighborhoods, "Greek Row," and the Colorado Street business district.

Members of the consultant team plan to make several more trips to Pullman during the course of the study. A final report from Studio Cascade is scheduled to be completed by the end of February.

### **Proposed Gray Lane and Oak Street Developments**

This month, the city received site plan applications for two multi-family projects to be located near the west entrance to the WSU campus. One of these applications involves the "University Park Apartments," a 21-unit apartment building to be located at 680 NE Gray Lane, across the street from the Reaney Park gazebo. The proposed structure would have three floors of apartments with some of the required parking spaces situated underneath the building. A portion of this property at Gray Lane was the subject of a zone change proposal acted on earlier this year by the City Council. The Council approved the rezone from WSU to R4 in July.

The other application relates to the "Stonegate Townhouses," a series of ten townhouses proposed for construction at 715 NE Oak Street. Each townhouse would have four levels, with a two-car garage in the basement accessed from the rear. Some form of townhouse development at this site has been in the works for quite a while. The original application, for a set of five townhouses on this land, was filed in 2004.

The land for both of these proposed projects was sold to private developers by WSU. The university maintains certain design controls over both projects as a condition of the real estate

*(Continued on page 4)*

### **APPEAL FILED AGAINST WAL-MART**

In our last newsletter, we reported that Superior Court Judge David Frazier upheld the decision of the Pullman hearing examiner to approve the proposed Wal-Mart store on Bishop Boulevard. On November 27, the Pullman Alliance for Responsible Development (PARD) filed an appeal of Judge Frazier's decision to the Court of Appeals, Division III, in Spokane. The appeal was not complete at the time of filing, as the appellant had not provided proof of service to

the city and Wal-Mart. PARD attorneys were given extra time to accomplish this task, and they perfected the appeal within the time allotted.

Whitman County Superior Court is now assembling the official record of its proceedings for transmittal to the Court of Appeals. Also, attorneys for Wal-Mart have ordered a verbatim transcript of Judge Frazier's decision for review by the appellate

court. Once these items have been delivered to the Court of Appeals, a three- to four-month period of attorney briefing ensues. Then, a few months later, the court will hear oral argument on the case. Several months after that, the court will render a written decision on the matter. The entire Court of Appeals process is rather lengthy. A recent Pullman land use case at this court level (a case much simpler with respect to the issues in question) took one year to resolve.



(Continued from page 3)

transactions.

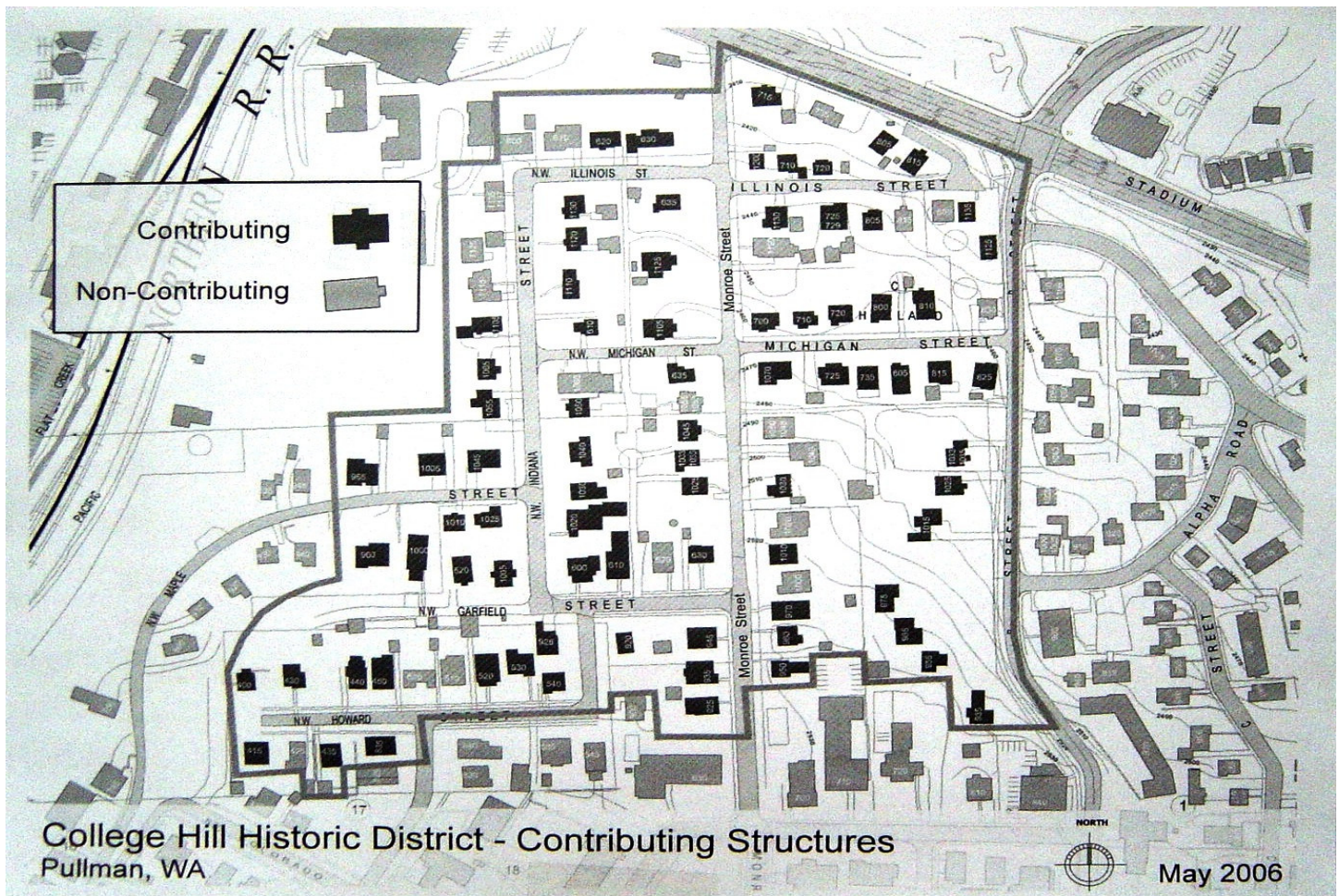
### **College Hill Historic District**

On November 3, the College Hill historic district, roughly bounded by Stadium Way, B Street, Howard Street, and Indiana Street, was added to the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Department of the Interior. The National Register was established in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966; the register provides federal recognition to properties of local, state, or national historic significance. While there are several individual properties in Pullman that are listed on the National Register, this is the first district within the city to be given this honorable distinction.

In a related development, during September, the planning department received an application for special tax valuation from the owner of the

single family house at 1005 NE Maple Street Extension (located within the College Hill historic district). Under the city's historic preservation ordinance passed earlier this year, an owner of historic property that has been renovated may request that the value of the renovation be subtracted from their property tax assessment for a period of ten years if they have maintained the historic character of the site. The city's Landmarks Commission (which is composed of the Planning Commission members serving in this additional role) decides on these applications.

At its meeting of December 13, the Landmarks Commission reviewed the request from the owner at 1005 NE Maple Street Extension. After discussing the matter, the Commission determined that the application was incomplete because several pieces of information required by city code had not yet been submitted. Planning staff expects the owner to submit an amended application early in 2007.



"Contributing" properties are those which contribute to the historic character of the district.



## Pending Land Use Applications

Displayed below are land use applications submitted to the planning or public works department or city-generated proposals for planning provisions that require a public meeting, public notice, or site plan review in accordance with the city code.

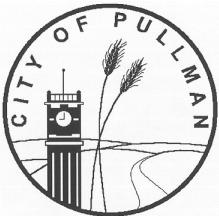
PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	STATUS
Brannan/Brelsford Annexation	annex 9.8 acres to the city	west of S. Grand Avenue/ Fairmount Drive intersection	CC hearing scheduled for 1/23
Paradise Downtown LLC Conditional Use Permit (C-06-5)	provide for doubling of housing density in mixed use development to allow up to 50 residences on a 25,000-sq-ft parcel	southwest corner of SE Paradise Street/SE High Street intersection	BOA hearing scheduled for January
Well #8 and Booster Pump #10 Conditional Use Permit (C-06-6)	construct water well and booster pump station in one building	533 SE Derby Street	possible BOA hearing in January
Vacation of side street off Alcora Drive	vacate 7,200-sq-ft public street	between 840 and 860 SW Alcora Drive	PC recommended approval on 12/13; CC hearing to be held early in 2007
Bryant House Special Valuation	request for special property tax valuation for single family house rehabilitation	1005 NE Maple Street	LC found application incomplete on 12/13
Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements Substantial Development Permit #75	construct 500,000-gallon primary digester and associated building	1025 NW Guy Street	approved permit transmitted to Dept. of Ecology for review
Wal-Mart Supercenter SEPA determination and site plan	develop 223,000-sq-ft store on a 28-acre site	south of SE Harvest Dr/Bishop Boulevard intersection	Superior Court judge denied PARD appeal on 10/18; PARD filed appeal with Court of Appeals on 11/27
Animal Haven site plan (03-15)	construct 12,000-sq-ft animal shelter facility on a 6.2-acre site	1350 SE Old Moscow Road	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Emmanuel Baptist Church Addition site plan (06-5)	construct 2,850-sq-ft addition to existing church building	1300 SE Sunnymead Way	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Fire District #12 Storage Building site plan (06-10)	construct 3,000-sq-ft truck storage building on 30,500-sq-ft site	912 W. Main Street	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Beasley Apartments (Phase I) site plan (06-13)	develop 11 condominiums in Phase I of 37-unit project on 3.1- acre site	210 NW Terre View Drive	staff reviewing revised site plan
VBC Apartments (Phase II) site plan (06-14)	develop 26 apartments on 1.4-acre site	555 NE Terre View Drive	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Cleveland Court site plan revision (04-9)	develop 4-plex on 18,750-sq-ft site	315 NW Cleveland Street	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Whitman Senior Estates site plan (06-17)	construct 30,000-sq-ft assisted living facility and 24 detached cottages	west end of SW Center Street	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Stonegate Townhouses site plan (04-31)	construct 10 townhouses on 18,150-sq-ft lot	715 NE Oak Street	staff reviewing site plan
University Park Apartments site plan (06-18)	develop 21 apartments on 23,656- sq-ft lot	680 NE Gray Lane	staff reviewing site plan

KEY TO ZONING DISTRICTS: R1 Single Family Residential; RT Residential Transitional; R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential; R3 Medium Density Multi-Family Residential; R4 High Density Multi-Family Residential; C1 Neighborhood Commercial; C2 Central Business District; C3 General Commercial; I1 Light Industrial; I2 Heavy Industrial; IRP Industrial Research Park; WSU Washington State University

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS: CC: City Council; PC: Planning Commission; BOA: Board of Adjustment; DOE: State Department of Ecology; LC: Landmarks Commission

NOTES: 1) If an applicant fails to act on a pending application for a period of six months, said application will be dropped from the above list. 2) Numbers in parentheses are planning staff's internal file numbers. 3) Site plan review by city staff is generally conducted for proposed construction of developments other than single family homes, duplexes, or manufactured homes; it does not apply to most construction on the WSU campus.





*Planning Department  
325 SE Paradise St.  
Pullman, WA 99163*

*Phone: 509-338-3213  
Fax: 509-338-3282  
Email: [bethany.johnson@pullman-wa.gov](mailto:bethany.johnson@pullman-wa.gov)*

**Pullman Planning Department Staff**

Pete Dickinson, Planning Director  
Erin Schau, Assistant Planner  
Bethany Johnson, Public Works Administrative  
Assistant  
Kealan Emerson, Public Works Administrative  
Specialist  
Neil Jeffers, Engineering/Planning Aide  
Evan Pond, Engineering/Planning Aide

This newsletter is an occasional and voluntary publication of the planning department and does not take the place of official notices required by law. Information provided in this newsletter is subject to change. Please contact the planning department or review official notices distributed by the city to confirm the information contained herein.

For any readers who are not currently receiving this newsletter by email and who wish to register for this service, please contact the planning department for assistance.

---

**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**

**[WWW.PULLMAN-WA.GOV](http://WWW.PULLMAN-WA.GOV)**

---